

Regional Conference Report

Region 1 – Southeast NB

Moncton Coliseum

**Community Non-profit Organizations Secretariat
October 23, 2008**

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The Southeast Regional Conference was held in Moncton on October 23rd. The 100 participants at the Conference had an opportunity to discuss through working groups and a question and answer period. The Hands-Up! Expo that followed was also a success. The 5000+ visitors to the Expo highlighted the generosity of New Brunswickers. Our province is fortunate to have such a large number of dedicated, caring and compassionate volunteers. Congratulations to the organizers and participants of Hands Up! Expo.

Nicole Smith
Executive Director

Document Outline:

Questions

- Funding and Administrative Burden
- Respect and Recognition
- Fostering a Culture of Volunteering
- Revitalizing the Partnership

Top Priorities

List of Attendees

Questions

(These questions were raised during discussion at the conference, on the evaluation sheets, and on parking lots sheets during round table discussion)

Funding and Administrative Burden

Q. *What are the criteria for participating in the multi-year funding?*

A. Departments will be using the record of performance that already exists for non-profit organizations. If an organization has received core funding from the Government over the last few years, has demonstrated financial accountability, and has good governance the non-profit organization may be eligible for the multi-year funding agreement. This fiscal year's funding will be used as the basis for negotiating these arrangements. These will need to be done on a department by department basis. The document references a five year funding agreement, however there will be some flexibility as three years may make more sense for some organizations and Departments.

Q. *What is the progress of the commitment for multi-year funding?*

A. A working group (topic table) has been established for this issue. The Chair of this committee, Fleurette Landry, has solicited input from interested non-profit organizations and is gathering this information together. At the same time, the Secretariat has started conversations with government departments around the details of multi year funding. All affected departments have been working on identifying eligible non-profit organizations for the multi-year funding.

Q. *Are there going to be changes with the SEED program?*

A. There is a working group (topic table) established that is currently discussing this program. The Chair of this committee, Sue Rickards, has solicited input from the sector. They are looking at elements such as the possibility of re-assignment of students from year to year, and directing program weeks to the non-profit sector (versus government).

Q. *Why are only three advocacy groups receiving funding?*

A. Although the Government will not be expanding funding for advocacy groups that deal with provincial issues, it remains committed to maintaining funding for the three advocacy agencies; the Advisory Council on the Status of Women, the New Brunswick Advisory Council on Youth and the Premier's Council on the Status of Disabled Persons. Further research and discussion will be undertaken by the Secretariat and advocacy groups on this issue.

Q. *Is government prepared to give more financial support to non-profit organizations?*

A. If budgets allow, government departments are encouraged to support their non-profit sector partners. Government respects the independence of non-profit organizations and recognizes the contributions they make towards fulfilling mandates of government departments.

Q. *How can non-profit organizations utilize government buildings and have community school access?*

A. There is an existing policy on how non-profit organizations may acquire government property. It is first offered to other government departments, then municipalities and then the non-profit sector. If you know of a property in which you are interested, you can let the Department of Supply and Services or the Secretariat know. There are no changes planned for this policy at this time.

The Secretariat has met with the Department of Education to discuss the recommendations that referred to schools. Education is reviewing the policies in place and discussing possibilities for improvement in the current policy.

Q. *Is the Secretariat planning to address the issue of relatively low salaries for those (especially women) in the sector? If so, how?*

A. The Government believes in the independence of organizations in the Non-Profit Sector to run their operations as they see fit. As such, the Government feels that it would be inappropriate for it to set salary scales for workers in this sector.

Respect and Recognition

Q. *How will you ensure an effective communication plan between government and the non-profit sector?*

A. We have several communication tools, including our website, newsletter, regional conferences, working groups (topic tables), Advisory Board and individual meetings with groups. We have a database of non-profit organizations that we use to send out information. If your group has not registered with our Secretariat, you may register on-line, or contact our office for more information. The Secretariat also has contacts within each government department. We have met with each department individually, as well as a larger group.

Q. *Is the Secretariat representing all Non-Profit Organizations in New Brunswick?*

A. The Secretariat is there to represent the concerns of all Community Non-Profit Organizations (CNPO), with the exception of Municipalities, Universities, Schools and Hospitals. The Secretariat will strive to present a voice to government on behalf of all CNPOs within New Brunswick.

- Q. *There should be better communication on finding individuals within government that the sector needs to connect with.*
- A. As part of a respectful relationship, non-profit organizations should receive direct and honest answers. The Secretariat does not replace the current relationship that non-profit organizations have with their usual partner departments, but can be of assistance if an agency is having communication issues within the government system.
- Q. *Where are the Secretariat's top priorities?*
- A. The only recommendations within *Delivering on the Blueprint* that have a fixed deadline are retention of surplus as well as multi-year finding. There is currently a working group looking at these topics, with the goal of first steps of implementation effective in 2009-2010. Our strategic plan, available on our website, outlines the priorities.

Fostering a Culture of Volunteering

- Q. *In reference to the items referred to the Tax Review Committee - will Non-Profit Organizations be consulted as partners?*
- A. In June the government announced that the Select Committee for Tax Review would be holding public hearings across the province. The Deputy Minister, Chris Baker, sat down with chair of the committee, Roly McIntyre to discuss the committee and their role in reviewing recommendations made within the government's response document *Delivering on the Blueprint*. The many organizations that want to comment on the policy itself were welcome to come to the regional meetings and make a presentation before the committee. The opportunity to submit a written brief was also available until August 1st, 2008. The Secretariat also submitted a letter to the Select Committee outlining the tax issues raised in the *Blueprint for Action*.
- Q. *There is a need to increase awareness and the value of volunteering in the province, especially with an emphasis on youth. How can the Secretariat help?*
- A. The need to create more awareness of volunteerism was strongly recommended. The Secretariat is meeting with Communications NB to investigate the possibility of a campaign. The Population Growth Secretariat has developed a Youth Engagement Fund to help support retaining Youth within our Province by engaging them to become active participants in their community. More information on this program is available on their website.

Revitalizing the Partnership

- Q. *How is the structure and opportunity for dialogue going to be organized?*

- A. One good opportunity for dialogue between the Non-Profit Sector and Government is going to be the regional conferences. At each conference we will be seeking the Non-Profit Sector's feedback and input. The Secretariat wants to take our cues from the sector. It is a point of contact for volunteers and the Non-Profit Sector to Government.
- Q. *How are we going to ensure that this Secretariat will not become another layer of bureaucracy?*
- A. The role of the Secretariat is to be a point of contact to facilitate a stronger connection between the non-profit sector and government. The Secretariat has been created by government to assist in policy development that relates to the non-profit sector. Any policy development that takes place will involve considering and consulting with the sector. Also, the Secretariat has been created to oversee that the recommendations in *Delivering on the Blueprint* are considered by all departments. Support for the non-profit sector is the number one role of the Secretariat. The Advisory Board will provide direction and act as a sounding board for the Secretariat. They will also provide the secretariat a link to the different regions within New Brunswick.
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Top Priorities

(Group discussion took place during the conference to provide an opportunity for the participants to share their priorities. The following were identified.)

- Concentrate on stable core administrative funding
- Funding of community organizations. There needs to be a link between the community organization and government objectives (example: health, youth, seniors, raising awareness)
- Salaries need to be competitive within the non-profit sector. If an NGO is providing a service that should be provided by the government, the NGO should receive enough funding to pay its employees good/fair wages
- Government should consider, within its funding, the salaries of staff within the non-profit sector
- Additional funds for recruitment and retention and for service delivery
- Cost of living increase considered in funding
- Funding for transportation be equivalent to government reimbursement policy for employees
- Appropriate turn around time for funding
- Funding for advocacy groups
- Fundraising (facilitate sharing the knowledge of how to fundraise; fundraising should be regulated)
- Health and pension plans (employee benefits)
- Liability insurance for boards needs to be affordable

- Youth need to be more active and present in processes. There needs to be a way to engage youth
- Improvements to the SEED program
- Environmental Trust Fund
- Have a meeting of all provincial organizations
- Secretariat must be an arms length body from government (a liaison with government, not a part of government)
- Establish community development officer in each region
- Partnership with private sector
- Coordinate conversation, talks between departments
- Poverty issues need to be addressed
- Minimize paperwork
- Training of the volunteer and administrators in order to assure good governance (using expertise from within the sector)
- Empty Government offices made available to non-profits (provide listing of potential spaces for use)
- Increase public awareness – Secretariat and volunteers and non-profit organizations to become more creative in advertising/marketing perhaps have workshops available
- The volunteers be given special status to prevent the cessation of employment insurance benefits for persons/employees wishing to donate their time to their organization while waiting for funding to be renewed
- At future conferences, it would be nice to be able to identify priorities as a sector for things the secretariat should undertake. This differs from the Blueprint in that, instead of each group talking about what it needs, priorities would be identified for the entire sector.
- The Non-Profit Sector needs more volunteers. The ones that the sector does have are overworked.
- Do not pass on work to the voluntary sector that should be the right of every citizen (ie. delivered by government)
- Raise minimum wage to over \$10.00

List of Attendees

Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat - Lisa Rivett
 AIDS/SIDA Moncton - Joanne Gallant
 AIDS/SIDA Moncton - Deborah Warren
 AIDS/SIDA Moncton - Karen Pearce
 AIDS/SIDA Moncton - Sam Juru
 AIDS/SIDA Moncton - Kate Doyle
 Alternative Residences Alternatives Inc. - Jacinthe Dufour
 Association du parc et du quai de Sainte-Marie - Fernand Girouard
 Association Handball Olympique N.B. - Adair Losier

Bass River Country Fair Hall Inc. - Ann Pohl
 BUILT Network Moncton Inc. - Cynthia Black
 Canaan Washademoak Watershed Assoc. - Stephanie Merrill
 Canaan Washademoak Watershed Association - Reace Black
 Canadian Mental Health Association - Denise Miller
 Canadian Parents for French - Ellen Pelletier
 Canadian Red Cross - Cecile Casey Boudreau
 Cape Jourimain Nature Centre - Sabine Dietz
 CARA Helpline Inc. - Karen Eustace
 CMHA Moncton - Alicia Lynn
 CMHA Moncton - Carmel Fitch
 CMHA Moncton - Carol Steel
 Coalition pour l'équité salariale du N.-B. - Johanne Perron
 Coalition pour l'équité salariale du N.-B. - Huberte Gautreau
 Crossroads - Carmen Hivon
 Dieppe, Recreation Services - Sylvie Michaud
 Dieppe, Recreation Services - Marise Cormier
 Department of Wellness, Culture & Sport - Chantal Deschenes-Jean
 Department of Natural Resources - Cecil Freeman
 Department of Post Secondary Education Training and Labour - Mike Blaney
 Department of Post-Secondary Education Training and Labour - Ghislaine Boudreau-Grant
 Department of Public Safety - Mary Tompkins
 Department of Public Safety - Gabrielle Maillet
 Department of Social Development - Diane Caissie
 Department of Social Development - Yolande Cyr Sinstadt
 Department of Social Development - Berthe Noël
 Développements Avidé Developments / APHL - Heidi Daigle
 Développements Avidé Developments / APHL - Amanda Dupuis
 Early Childhood Stimulation Inc./Stimulation à l'enfance inc - Fleurette Landry
 Fédération alphabétisation du NB - Michel C Belliveau
 Food Depot Alimentaire Inc. - Ray Gould
 Groupe de développement durable du Pays de Cocagne - Jocelyne Gauvin
 Healthy Active Living Program for the 50 plus- Jean-Claude Cormier
 Healthy Eating Physical Activity Coalition of NB - Nora Dickson
 John Howard Society - Paul McAfee
 John Howard Society - Margo Butler
 John Howard Society - Ron Hines
 Karing Kitchen Inc. - Lillian MacMellon
 Karing Kitchen Inc. - Phyllis Perry
 L'Association des Universités du 3e âge du N.-B. - Willie Lirette
 L'Association francophone des parents du N.-B. - Myriam Larochelle
 Le Phare des services communautaires inc. - Colette B. Lacroix
 MAGMA-AMGM - Lorraine LeClair
 Maison Nazareth - Robert Thibault
 MLA, Moncton East - Gisèle Maillet

Mobile One Community Services Inc. - Sean L. Tobin
 Moncton Community Residences Incorporated - Noella Smith
 Moncton Headstart Inc. - Clare Archibald
 Moncton Regional Learning Council - Peter Sawyer
 Moncton Youth Residences Inc. - Cathy Manuel
 New Brunswick Environmental Network - Raissa Marks
 New Brunswick Non-Profit Housing Association, Alex Arseneau
 New Brunswick Seniors Federation - Ralph Smith
 Pedvac Foundation - Val MacDermid
 Petitcodiac Riverkeeper - Tim Van Hinte
 Petitcodiac Watershed Alliance - Susan Linkletter
 Positive Recreation Opportunities for Kids (PRO Kids) - Tammy DeSaulniers
 Renaissance Sackville - Janine O'Reilly
 Riverview Arts Center - Dave Fyffe
 Riverview Arts center - Louise Fyffe
 Salisbury Boys & Girls Club Inc. - Claudette Middleton
 Salisbury Boys & Girls Club Inc. - Evelyn Robichaud
 Schizophrenia Society of NB, Moncton Chapter - Marie-Rose Evers
 SE Rural Early Intervention Program - Susan Stuart
 Skate Canada NB - Linda LeBlanc
 Société des enseignantes et des enseignants retraités francophones du N.-B. - Roger Doiron
 Southern Gulf of St. Lawrence Coalition on Sustainability - Nadine Gauvin
 Tantramar Hospice Palliative Care Organization, Inc. - Susan Kastuk-Ridlington
 The Arthritis Society - Marg Elliott
 Tri-County Ground Search & Rescue - Eldon Gilmore
 United Way - Paul Toner
 United Way of Greater Moncton - Debbie McInnis
 United Way of Greater Moncton & Southeastern NB Region Inc - Micha Fardy
 Vestiaire St Joseph Inc. - Pat Sirois
 Village of Memramcook - Guy Gautreau
 Volunteer Centre of Southeastern New Brunswick Inc. - Eileen Saunders
 Volunteer Centre of Southeastern New Brunswick Inc. - Debby LeBlanc
 Volunteer Centre of Southeastern New Brunswick Inc. - Annette Vautour-MacKay,
 YMCA of Greater Moncton - Zane Korytko
 YMCA of Greater Moncton - Bertha Darling